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National Security Council

The attached memorandum was prepared in response to your memorandum of 28 April 1980--many thanks for the feedback. You may want to share this with the originator.

R. E. Hineman
AD/NFAC

Date

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

8 May 1980

MEMORANDUM

NSC COMMENTS ON IRAN

We appreciate receiving the NSC comments on our paper concerning Soviet policy toward the Iran-Iraq conflict. There is no question that this type of feed-back is useful. It enables us to see how our product is being received and interpreted and thus to follow up with pertinent information and analysis which will hopefully prove beneficial. []

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It is certainly true that the memorandum does not deal with a broad range of developments concerning Iran or with broad Soviet policies designed to exploit Iran's instability. It was intended to focus on the Iran-Iraq dispute and on the Soviet attitude toward that dispute. While the NSC wrap-up of the paper's analysis is generally accurate, it does not mention the paper's final conclusion--that the Soviet posture could well change, and even involve military action, should the Iran-Iraq situation deteriorate further and should hostilities appear to be fostering a significant erosion of central authority leading to Iran's fragmentation. []

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There is no question that the USSR has been attempting to exploit Iran's instability and to move that country into the Soviet orbit. This has been consistent Soviet policy

This memorandum was prepared by [] Office of Political Analysis. Comments and queries are welcome and should be directed to the Chief, Soviet External Branch,

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since the Iranian revolution began.

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However, the list of "recent developments" cited in the comments may be somewhat misleading when it comes to analyzing probable Soviet actions in Iran. Many of these "developments" are not recent and some are factually questionable.

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-- The Azarbayjan Democratic Party, whose ties to Tudeh strongly point to a Soviet connection, was reactivated early in 1979 (not within the past few months); it appears to have become increasingly active in the past six months.

-- [redacted] Soviet aid to dissident groups, we believe that the Soviets approve and indirectly support the funneling of arms and the providing of guerrilla training to such groups. This indirect approach enables them to foster instability and advance their own position with such groups while retaining their ability to deny actual involvement. [redacted]

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We are currently preparing a paper on Soviet policy toward Iran since the invasion of Afghanistan and we plan to address in some detail most of the points raised in the NSC comments. We would be very pleased to get together and discuss any of these topics at your convenience. [redacted]

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SUBJECT: NSC COMMENTS ON IRAN

NFAC/OPA/USSR-EE/SRE, [REDACTED] 8 May 80

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